

The University of Leeds
EXTERNAL EXAMINER'S REPORT

ACADEMIC YEAR: 2016-17

Part A: General Information

Subject area and awards being examined

Faculty / School of:	School of Design
Subject(s):	<i>Fashion Marketing</i>
Programme(s) / Module(s):	Fashion Marketing
Awards (e.g. BA/BSc/MSc etc):	BA (Hons)

Part B: Comments for the Institution on the Examination Process and Standards

Points of innovation and/or good practice

Please highlight areas of innovation or good practice within the programmes or processes you have been involved with in this box.
The final year project is certainly a defining and differentiating feature of the programme.

It is innovative in terms of its structure, method and the scope of its coverage. It provides students with an opportunity to develop and enhance their knowledge, creative skills and understanding in areas of personal academic interest. The final project work offers an opportunity for students to link their academic studies with creative output. Furthermore, given that many elect to investigate contemporary fashion marketing issues, there is no doubting that the final year offers an excellent opportunity for students to understand better the salient marketing management issues the shape and impact upon business activity. This aspect of the programme both supports and enhances the students' career-readiness and employment prospects.

Enhancements made from the previous year

Please highlight any enhancements made to the programme(s) or processes over the past year in this box.

I note that the course team has enhanced the programme by developing and extending the coverage of advances and developments in the area of digital marketing within the fashion sector. In particular, there was a welcome emphasis upon the role and importance of social media channels with respect to fashion communications activity. I also noted that the programme has further developed the scope and view of the programme to be more globally orientated – specifically in terms of coverage of international fashion businesses, their distinctive practices and their adaptations in order to secure a wider global reach.

Matters for Urgent Attention

If there are any areas which you think require urgent attention before the programme is offered again please note them in this box

None required.

For Examiners in the first year of appointment

1.	Were you provided with an External Examiners Handbook?	Y / N
2.	Were you provided with copies of previous relevant External Examiners' reports and the response of the School to these?	Y / N

3.	Were you provided with an External Examiner Mentor?	Y / N
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For Examiners completing their term of appointment

4.	Have you observed improvements in the programme(s) over the period of your appointment?	Yes
5.	Has the school responded to comments and recommendations you have made?	Yes
6.	Where recommendations have not been implemented, did the school provide clear reasons for this?	Not applicable
7.	Have you acted as an External Examiner Mentor?	No

Please comment on your experience of the programme(s) over the period of your appointment, remarking in particular on changes from year to year and the progressive development and enhancement of the learning and teaching provision, on standards achieved, on marking and assessment and the procedures of the School

Without question, the programme has progressed and developed positively in a number of key areas and ways since it was first launched. Throughout this first phase in the development of the programme, I have pleased to note and comment that the organisation and management of the programme has been exemplary. Efficient, effective and professional through-out, it seems to me that the course leader and the course team have been committed to a professional, student-centred delivery of the programme. Furthermore, I have been impressed by the nature and extent to which the team has been open to suggestion and recommendation. Where appropriate and possible, they have taken on recommendations fully and well. In terms of the two main developments that I have noted, the first would be that the programme has steadily developed in terms of its academic rigour and scholarly underpinning. Relevant theories and concepts are now the mainstay of the programme and there has been a clear effort by the team to ensure that their teaching accommodates the very latest academic thinking. Secondly, I note that the programme has progressed from taking an overly design-led focus to one that is now clearly framed within the fashion marketing discipline. The shift to a more diverse and inclusive perspective has been undertaken fully and well.

Standards

8.	Is the overall programme structure coherent and appropriate for the level of study?	Yes
9.	Does the programme structure allow the programme aims and intended learning outcomes to be met?	Yes
10.	Are the programme aims and intended learning outcomes commensurate with the level of award?	Yes
11.	Did the Aims and ILOs meet the expectations of the national subject benchmark (where relevant)?	Yes
12.	Is the programme(s) comparable with similar programmes at other institutions?	Yes

Please use this box to explain your overall impression of the programme structure, design, aims and intended learning outcomes.

The programme structure, design, aims and learning outcomes appear to me to be well considered and clearly aligned. These provide the students with a learning experience that is coherent, progressive in terms of challenge and engaging in terms of the creative space provided. I note and welcome that the scope of the programme is not narrow and it provides students with the opportunity to develop their interests in ways and in areas that are of personal relevance and interest. The aims of the programme remain relevant and the learning outcomes direct the focus of study and learning in a clear and effective manner.

13.	Is the influence of research on the curriculum and learning and teaching clear?	Yes
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Please explain how this is/could be achieved (examples might include: curriculum design informed by current research in the subject; practice informed by research; students undertaking research)

I note that the course content clearly seeks to incorporate areas of recent research thinking and output as demonstrated by the focus of assessments and the detail of students' assessment submissions. Students are required to undertake individual / independent research as part of their third year course work, in particular. While, on some occasions, the students failed to adequately integrate a clear theoretical framework for their research, most were clearly able to demonstrate a competent understanding of the research process.

14.	Does the programme form part of an Integrated PhD?	N/A
<i>Please comment on the appropriateness of the programme as training for a PhD:</i>		
15.	Does the programme include clinical practice components?	N/A
<i>Please comment on the learning and assessment of practice components of the curriculum here:</i>		
16.	Is the programme accredited by a Professional or Statutory Regulatory Body (PSRB)?	N/A
<i>Please comment on the value of, and the programme's ability to meet, PSRB requirements here:</i>		

Assessment and Feedback

17.	Does the programme design clearly align intended learning outcomes with assessment?	Yes
<i>Please comment on the assessment methods and the appropriateness of these to the ILOs, in particular: the design and structure of the assessment methods, and the arrangements for the marking of modules and the classification of awards; the quality of teaching, learning and assessment methods that may be indicated by student performance.</i>		
<p>I note that the standard of attainment reached by the students, as demonstrated by their degree classifications, was excellent this year. The strength in the students' assessment performance demonstrated to me that the quality of the teaching and learning for this programme was excellent. I note that feedback is constructive and often extensive. Careful consideration is given to feedback. The design and structure of the assessment methods was sufficiently varied and offered an appropriate challenge. Further, I note that marking was fair, consistent and transparent.</p>		
18.	Is the design and structure of the assessment methods appropriate to the level of award?	Yes
19.	Were students given adequate opportunity to demonstrate their achievement of the programme aims and intended learning outcomes?	Yes
<i>Please comment on the academic standards demonstrated by the students and, where possible, their performance in relation to students on comparable courses; the strengths and weaknesses of the students as a cohort:</i>		
<p>Overall, I am of the view that the academic standard demonstrated by the students was very good. I am of the view that the performance of the students was commensurate (and in some instances exceeded) the Standards achieved by students in comparable courses.</p> <p>In terms of the strengths of the cohort:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industrious, diligent and committed to their studies and their personal projects, in particular; • High levels of creativity – especially in areas such as brand development, marketing communications and new product development; • Understanding and execution of creative project management process; • Range and depth of understanding with respect to contemporary fashion marketing theories and concepts. <p>In terms of weaknesses of the cohort:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While competent in their grasp of the marketing planning process, students often failed to consider the financial dimensions / implications of their decisions; • Further progress is required with respect to the use or adoption of digital analytics with respect to measuring fashion marketing performance; 		

- Similarly, there was insufficient evidence of competence with respect to consumer related data analysis and interpretation.

Please use this box to provide any additional comments you would like to make in relation to assessment and feedback:

Assessment methods were typically imaginative, challenging and provided sufficient scope for students to demonstrate a range of skills, interests and knowledge.

The Progression and Awards Process

20.	Were you provided with guidance relating to the External Examiners role, powers and responsibilities in the examination process?	Yes
21.	Was the progression and award guidance provided sufficient for you to act effectively as an External Examiner?	Yes
22.	Did you receive appropriate programme documentation for your area(s) of responsibility?	Yes
23.	Did you receive appropriate module documentation for your area(s) of responsibility?	Yes
24.	Did you receive full details of marking criteria applicable to your area(s) of responsibility?	Yes
25.	Were you provided with all draft examination papers/assessments?	Yes
26.	Was the nature and level of the assessment questions appropriate?	Yes
27.	Were suitable arrangements made to consider your comments on assessment questions?	Yes
28.	Was sufficient assessed work made available to enable you to have confidence in your evaluation of the standard of student work?	Yes
29.	Were the examination scripts clearly marked/annotated?	Yes
30.	Was the choice of subjects for final year projects and/or dissertations appropriate?	Yes
31.	Was the method and standard of assessment appropriate for the final year projects and/or dissertations?	Yes
32.	Were the administrative arrangements satisfactory for the whole process, including the operation of the Progression and Awards Board?	Yes
33.	Were you able to attend the Progression and Awards Board meeting?	Yes
34.	Were you satisfied with the recommendations of the Progression and Awards Board?	Yes
35.	Were you satisfied with the way decisions from the School Special Circumstances meeting were communicated to the Progression and Awards Board?	Yes

Please use this box to provide any additional comments you would like to make on the questions above:

The Progression and Awards Board was undertaken in an efficient and effective manner.

Other comments

Please use this box if you wish to make any further comments not covered elsewhere on the form

In this, my final year as External Examiner, I would like to commend the Course Leader and the Teaching Team for their commitment to the on-going development of this programme. During the period of my tenure, I am pleased to note an on-going advancement of students' performance. This is an excellent programme that is fully and expertly supported by an outstanding administrative team.